



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Edinburgh Research Explorer

A survey of root knot nematodes and resistance to *Meloidogyne incognita* in sweet potato varieties from Kenyan fields

Citation for published version:

Karuri, HW, Olago, D, Neilson, R, Mararo, E & Villinger, J 2016, 'A survey of root knot nematodes and resistance to *Meloidogyne incognita* in sweet potato varieties from Kenyan fields', *Crop Protection*.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cropro.2016.10.020>

Digital Object Identifier (DOI):

[10.1016/j.cropro.2016.10.020](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cropro.2016.10.020)

Link:

[Link to publication record in Edinburgh Research Explorer](#)

Document Version:

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Published In:

Crop Protection

Publisher Rights Statement:

© 2016 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

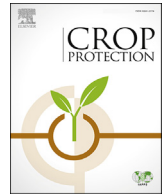
General rights

Copyright for the publications made accessible via the Edinburgh Research Explorer is retained by the author(s) and / or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing these publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

Take down policy

The University of Edinburgh has made every reasonable effort to ensure that Edinburgh Research Explorer content complies with UK legislation. If you believe that the public display of this file breaches copyright please contact openaccess@ed.ac.uk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.





A survey of root knot nematodes and resistance to *Meloidogyne incognita* in sweet potato varieties from Kenyan fields

Hannah W. Karuri ^{a,d,*}, Daniel Olago ^b, Roy Neilson ^c, Enock Mararo ^d, Jandouwe Villinger ^d

^a Department of Biological Sciences, University of Embu, P.O. Box 6-60100, Embu, Kenya

^b Institute for Climate Change and Adaptation, University of Nairobi, P.O. Box 30197-00100, Nairobi, Kenya

^c The James Hutton Institute, Invergowrie, Dundee DD2 5DA, Scotland, UK

^d International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (icipe), P.O. Box 30772, Nairobi 00100, Kenya

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 13 June 2016

Received in revised form

17 October 2016

Accepted 29 October 2016

Available online 10 November 2016

Keywords:

Diversity

Ipomoea batatas

Meloidogyne incognita

ABSTRACT

The root knot nematode, *Meloidogyne* is one of the most economically damaging plant parasitic nematode groups, and are widely distributed in Kenyan agro-ecosystems. The aim of this study was to determine the diversity of *Meloidogyne* species in Kenyan sweet potato fields and identify sweet potato varieties that exhibit resistance to *M. incognita*. *Meloidogyne* species were collected from Nyanza, Western, Eastern and Central Provinces of Kenya. Mitochondrial DNA was used to differentiate *Meloidogyne* species. The most common species in all sampled regions was *M. incognita*. *Meloidogyne hapla* was recorded for the first time in Kenyan sweet potato growing areas (Mosocho, Matayos, Teso South, Manyatta, and Nzaui sub-counties), while *M. enterolobii* was observed in Kiharu, Matayos and Mosocho sub-counties and a novel *Meloidogyne* sp. was identified in Kiharu sub-county. Seventy-two sweet potato varieties collected from both agricultural fields and research stations in Kenya were evaluated for resistance to *M. incognita* under greenhouse conditions in two separate trials. Known susceptible (Beauregard) and resistant (Tanzania) sweet potato varieties were included as controls. Responses of sweet potato varieties to *M. incognita* infection was assessed by the number of eggs present and level of galling on a scale of 1–5, where 0 = 0 galls and 5 ≥ 100 galls. The reproduction index (RI) was used to classify the varieties as resistant or susceptible. There was a significant difference ($P < 0.001$) in the number of eggs, GI and RI among the varieties tested. Forty nine sweet potato varieties were considered very resistant and may be used in breeding programs to incorporate resistance against *M. incognita* into commercial cultivars of sweet potato or to use them in crop rotation programmes for management of RKN. The results on *Meloidogyne* species diversity in Kenyan sweet potato fields will also be useful in nematode management programs.

© 2016 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

Root knot nematodes (RKN; *Meloidogyne* spp.) are ranked as the most economically damaging group of plant parasitic nematodes (Jones et al., 2013) with a global distribution (Sasser, 1977). The genus *Meloidogyne* is composed of about 100 species, with *M. arenaria*, *M. incognita*, *M. hapla* and *M. javanica* being considered as

“major” species (Elling, 2013). Out of the 100 identified *Meloidogyne* species, 22 occur in Africa, posing a significant threat to crop production by small-holder farmers. Among these, *M. incognita*, *M. javanica*, *M. hapla*, *M. africana*, *M. acrona*, and *M. kikuyensis* have been previously reported in Kenya (Onkendi et al., 2014) in various cropping systems (Desaeger and Rao, 1999; Kimenju et al., 1999; Nzesya et al., 2014; Van den Berg et al., 2001).

Africa is the second largest producer of sweet potato (10.6%) after Asia (86.5%). The area under sweet potato cultivation in Kenya has increased from 30,000 ha in 1994 to the current 90,000 ha (Tedesco and Stathers, 2015). Sweet potato production in Kenya in 2013 was 1.2 million tonnes compared to 285,000 tonnes in 1994 (FAOSTAT, 2015). In Kenya, sweet potato is an important staple food

* Corresponding author. Department of Biological Sciences, University of Embu, P.O. Box 6-60100, Embu, Kenya.

E-mail addresses: hwkaruri@gmail.com (H.W. Karuri), dolago@uonbi.ac.ke (D. Olago), roy.neilson@hutton.ac.uk (R. Neilson), enockmararo@gmail.com (E. Mararo), jandouwe@icipe.org (J. Villinger).

and feed crop and it is also a source of income for many families who sell it as a cash crop (Claessens et al., 2009; Mukras et al., 2013). Sweet potato constitutes an important part of dietary components in urban and rural Kenya due to its cheap price compared with other crops (Tedesco and Stathers, 2015). The major sweet potato growing regions are in Nyanza and Western Province, Kenya (Kaguongo et al., 2012). In addition to cultivation of white and cream flesh sweet potato, Kenyan small holder farmers also grow orange fleshed varieties which are a rich source of β -carotene with a high potential of improving vitamin A status (Hagenimana et al., 2001; Tumwegamire et al., 2004). Sweet potato yields are reduced by various biotic and abiotic factors with the major production constraint being *M. incognita* (Jatala and Russell, 1972). This species causes root galling which reduces the uptake of water and nutrients. It also causes necrosis and cracking of roots which reduces their marketable quality (Lawrence et al., 1986).

Projections by the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) indicate that there will be an increase in mean annual temperature and rainfall in East Africa (Christensen et al., 2007). The elevated temperature and moisture may result in an increase in the rate of RKN reproduction, development and infection, and cause shifts in their abundance and geographic distribution. Such effects may have a detrimental impact on sweet potato production in Kenya. Current RKN management in sweet potato is mainly through crop rotation, and the use of nematode free propagation material coupled with the use of nematicides. However, nematicides increase the cost of production and pose a risk to human health and the environment. The use of resistant sweet potato varieties has been cited as the most economical, effective, and environmentally safe method of managing *Meloidogyne* spp. as it significantly decreases production costs (Clark and Moyer, 1988). Resistant varieties produce better yields with tubers of good quality hence increasing their market value.

Information on the diversity of *Meloidogyne* species associated with a crop is important since the interaction of these species during concomitant infections affects plant defense responses (Ogallal and McClure, 1995). There are taxonomic limitations in differentiating *Meloidogyne* species using perineal patterns due to similarities in morphological characteristics among species. Molecular techniques are more reliable and have been successfully applied in identification of *Meloidogyne* species (Blok et al., 2002; Hu et al., 2011; Niu et al., 2012) and in assessing their evolutionary relationships (Chen et al., 2003; Janssen et al., 2016; Tenente et al., 2004; Tigano et al., 2005) and genetic diversity (Devran and Sogut, 2009; Janssen et al., 2016; Navas et al., 2001; Pokharel et al., 2007). The aim of this study was to determine the distribution and prevalence of *Meloidogyne* species in sweet potato fields in Kenya and to identify sweet potato varieties that exhibit resistance to *M. incognita*.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Collection of samples

Soil and sweet potato vines that were used in resistance screening experiments were collected from 60 fields in 30 villages within Mosoch, Matayos, Teso South, Manyatta, Nzau and Kiharu sub-counties of Kenya (Table 1). Sampling sites were farmers' fields and research stations (Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization -KALRO) and were located in the main sweet potato growing regions in Kenya. Soil samples from each field were collected from 30 sampling points close to sweet potato roots along three W shaped "sample walks" (Wiesel et al., 2015).

2.2. Extraction and molecular identification of *Meloidogyne*

Meloidogyne species present in soil samples collected from the field (Table 1) were extracted by planting individual nematode free tomato plants (*Lycopersicon esculentum* Mill. cv. Rutgers) in 500 cm³ pots containing soil from each field. The tomato plants were maintained in the greenhouse at 25 \pm 3 °C. Populations of each *Meloidogyne* species were obtained by randomly picking ten egg masses from the roots of each tomato plant after 60 days. In order to obtain a pure population, ten tomato plants were each inoculated with a single egg mass and uprooted after 60 days. Roots were washed and a female nematode teased out of a gall using forceps. DNA was extracted from a single female nematode by crushing it in 300 μ L cell lysis buffer (10 mM Tris pH 8, 0.5% SDS and 5 mM EDTA). The mixture was incubated for 30 min at 65 °C before adding 100 μ L protein precipitation solution (8 M ammonium acetate and 1 mM EDTA) at room temperature. Samples were vortexed for 30 s, placed on ice for five minutes and centrifuged for 3 min at 25,000 relative centrifugal force (rcf). The supernatant was removed and placed in a tube containing 300 μ L isopropanol, mixed several times and centrifuged at 25,000 rcf for five minutes. The resultant supernatant was discarded and 300 μ L 70% ethanol was added followed by centrifugation for 2 min at 25,000 rcf. The ethanol was then pipetted off and the DNA pellet air dried, hydrated with 200 μ L water and stored at –20 °C until processing.

Primers Mel_C2F3_F (GGTCAATGTTTCAGAAATTTGTGG) (Powers and Harris, 1993) and Mel_MR106_R (AATTTCTAAA-GACTTTTCTTAGT) (Stanton et al., 1997) targeting mtDNA were used in the PCR reactions. Amplification of DNA was performed in a volume of 20 μ L containing 13 μ L nuclease free PCR water, 3 μ L 5X HOT FIREpol Blend Master Mix (Solis BioDyne, Estonia), 0.5 μ L of each primer and 3 μ L of DNA. PCR conditions consisted of initial denaturation at 95 °C for 15 min; 50 cycles of 95 °C for 1 min, 56 °C for 1 min, and 66 °C for 2 min and 30s; and a final extension of 66 °C for 12 min. PCR products were separated by electrophoresis in TAE buffer and visualized under UV light. PCR products >1700 base pairs were restricted using HinfI restriction enzyme (New England Biolabs) as first described by Powers and Harris (1993). The digestion mixture included 1 μ L HinfI, 1 μ L 10X NE buffer and 10 μ L PCR product. The restriction digestion was then performed at 37 °C for 15 min with inactivation at 80 °C for 15 min. Restriction fragments were visualized beside 100 bp DNA ladders on 2% agarose gel in TAE buffer. Before outsourcing capillary sequencing (Macrogen, Seoul, Korea) of PCR products, they were purified using ExoSAP-IT (Thermo Scientific). Sequences were edited and aligned with *Meloidogyne* sequences available on GenBank using Geneious software v8.1.4 (Biomatters, San Francisco, CA, USA). Species identification was confirmed based on sequences with \geq 99% homology to reference sequences from GenBank.

2.3. Nematode inoculum for resistance screening experiments

Pure populations from a single egg mass of *M. incognita* race 1 were multiplied on tomato (*L. esculentum* Mill. cv. Rutgers). Nematode eggs were extracted by cutting the tomato roots into 10–20 mm sections and agitating them in 0.6% NaOCl for four minutes (Hussey and Barker, 1973). The homogenate was then washed with distilled water through an 80 and 500-mesh sieve.

2.4. Nematode resistance screening of sweet potato varieties

Vine cuttings of 72 sweet potato varieties collected from sites described in Table 1 were transferred to a greenhouse at the University of Nairobi (Kenya) for subsequent experiments. Known susceptible (Beauregard) and resistant (Tanzania) sweet potato

Table 1

Sample collection sites for sweet potato in Kenya.

| Province | County | Sub-County | Latitude | Longitude | Village | Meloidogyne species | Sweet potato variety |
|----------|----------|------------|-------------|--------------|------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Nyanza | Kisii | Mosochi | 0°38'58.6"S | 34°44'56.8"E | Nyabungututu | <i>M. incognita</i> | KS1 |
| | | | 0°38'13.9"S | 34°44'16.4"E | Kiaboega | <i>M. incognita</i> | Mosambi 1 |
| | | | 0°39'35.4"S | 34°45'16.4"E | Bonyagatenyi | <i>M. incognita</i> | Oburi |
| | | | 0°39'33.8"S | 34°45'11.5"E | Nyakobaria | <i>M. incognita</i> | Nyakamoro |
| | | | 0°35'50.8"S | 34°42'58.4"E | Mwamasarore | <i>M. incognita</i> and <i>M. enterolobii</i> | KS2 |
| | | | 0°36'04.2"S | 34°42'46.2"E | Mwabagaka | <i>M. incognita</i> | KS3 |
| | | | | | | | KS4 |
| | | | | | | | KS5 |
| | | | | | | | KS6 |
| | | | | | | | Mosambi 2 |
| Western | Busia | Matayos | 0°36'15.5"S | 34°43'05.9"E | Mwamoja | <i>M. incognita</i> and <i>M. hapla</i> | Mbwayo |
| | | | 0°21'31.2"N | 34°10'15.7"E | Namikoe | <i>M. incognita</i> | KS7 |
| | | | 0°21'32.7"N | 34°10'17.6"E | Buroboi A | <i>M. incognita</i> | KS8 |
| | | | 0°21'38.2"N | 34°10'08.8"E | Buroboi B | <i>M. incognita</i> | Mosambi 3 |
| | | | 0°22'21.4"N | 34°09'24.1"E | Nabisiongo | <i>M. incognita</i> | Kampala 1 |
| | | | | | | | Miezi tatu |
| | | | | | | | BS1 |
| | | | | | | | BS2 |
| | | | | | | | BS3 |
| | | | | | | | BS4 |
| Eastern | Embu | Manyatta | 0°25'21.6"N | 34°08'46.0"E | Emaseno | <i>M. incognita</i> | BS5 |
| | | | | | | | BS6 |
| | | | | | | | BS7 |
| | | | | | | | Kampala 2 |
| | | | | | | | BS8 |
| | | | | | | | BS9 |
| | | | | | | | BS10 |
| | | | | | | | BS11 |
| | | | | | | | BS12 |
| | | | | | | | BS13 |
| Central | Murang'a | Kiharu | 0°26'36.8"N | 34°06'44.3"E | Buruba | <i>M. incognita</i> and <i>M. enterolobii</i> | BS14 |
| | | | 0°29'53.9"N | 34°07'41.7"E | Angorom (KALRO, ALupe) | <i>M. incognita</i> and <i>M. hapla</i> | BS15 |
| | | | | | | | Vitaa |
| | | | | | | | Kenspot 6 |
| | | | | | | | Kenspot 4 |
| | | | | | | | Kenspot 1 |
| | | | | | | | Kenspot 3 |
| | | | | | | | Kenspot 2 |
| | | | | | | | Kabode |
| | | | | | | | TS1 |
| Eastern | Embu | Manyatta | 0°30'46.3"N | 34°08'57.9"E | Andungos | <i>M. incognita</i> | TS2 |
| | | | | | | | TS3 |
| | | | 0°30'51.3"N | 34°08'54.6"E | Andukumut | <i>M. incognita</i> | TS4 |
| | | | 0°31'09.4"S | 37°26'55.7"E | Njukiri | <i>M. incognita</i> | EM1 |
| | | | | | | | EM2 |
| | | | 0°30'03.4"S | 37°26'50.8"E | Mariamairi | <i>M. incognita</i> | EM3 |
| | | | | | | | EM4 |
| | | | | | | | EM5 |
| | | | 0°29'27.7"S | 37°27'14.1"E | Githungururu | <i>M. incognita</i> | EM6 |
| | | | 0°30'21.0"S | 37°27'26.6"E | Kangaru (KALRO, Embu) | <i>M. incognita</i> and <i>M. hapla</i> | EM7 |
| Central | Murang'a | Kiharu | | | | | EM8 |
| | | | 0°30'54.1"S | 37°27'59.0"E | Iveche | <i>M. incognita</i> and <i>M. hapla</i> | SPK 004 |
| | | | | | | | Cape 10 |
| | | | | | | | Bungoma |
| | | | | | | | EM9 |
| | | | 1°56'54.9"S | 37°31'52.0"E | Kiinze | <i>M. incognita</i> | EM10 |
| | | | 1°56'35.3"S | 37°32'06.1"E | Kinui | <i>M. incognita</i> | MK1 |
| | | | 1°57'22.6"S | 37°33'58.9"E | Kikuu | <i>M. incognita</i> | MK2 |
| | | | 1°58'41.8"S | 37°35'43.2"E | Kalima | <i>M. incognita</i> | MK3 |
| | | | | | | | MK4 |
| Central | Murang'a | Kiharu | | | | | MK5 |
| | | | | | | | MK6 |
| | | | | | | | MK7 |
| | | | | | | | MK8 |
| | | | | | | | MK9 |
| | | | | | | | MK10 |
| | | | | | | | MK11 |
| | | | | | | | MK12 |
| | | | 1°59'48.0"S | 37°35'54.0"E | Inyeke | <i>M. incognita</i> and <i>M. hapla</i> | MK13 |
| | | | | | | | MK14 |
| Central | Murang'a | Kiharu | 1°58'12.1"S | 37°34'41.4"E | Kyanguu | <i>M. incognita</i> | MK15 |
| | | | 0°44'21.4"S | 37°09'14.1"E | Kongoini | <i>M. incognita</i> | MK16 |
| Central | Murang'a | Kiharu | | | | | SPK 004 |
| | | | | | | | |

Table 1 (continued)

| Province | County | Sub-County | Latitude | Longitude | Village | Meloidogyne species | Sweet potato variety |
|----------|--------|------------|-------------|--------------|---------|--|----------------------|
| | | | 0°46'56.8"S | 37°11'11.5"E | Maragua | <i>M. incognita</i> , <i>M. enterolobii</i> and <i>Meloidogyne</i> sp. | |
| | | | 0°44'18.0"S | 37°07'51.8"E | Maragi | <i>M. incognita</i> | SPK 004 |
| | | | | | | <i>M. incognita</i> | SPK 004 |

varieties were included as controls in the trial (provided by Benjamin Kavuva-KALRO, Muguga). Five plants per sweet potato variety were planted in sterilized soil (50:50, sand:soil mixture) in perforated 500 cm³ plastic pots arranged in a completely randomized design. Plants were watered as required and the greenhouse temperature maintained at 25 ± 3 °C. Two weeks after planting, approximately 10,000 *M. incognita* race 1 eggs per pot were inoculated into the soil and covered with a moist layer of sand (Cervantes-Flores and Yencho, 2002). Plants were harvested at eight weeks after inoculation and rated visually for the number of galls using a 0–5 galling index (GI) as follows: 0 = 0 galls; 1 = 1–2 galls; 2 = 3–10 galls; 3 = 11–30 galls; 4 = 31–100 galls; 5 > 100 galls (Taylor and Sasser, 1978). Nematode eggs were extracted from 20 g root subsamples as previously described and counted using a stereomicroscope. Resistance and susceptibility of sweet potato varieties was based on a reproduction index (RI), which was calculated as number of eggs gram⁻¹ of sweet potato root divided by the number of eggs gram⁻¹ of susceptible control roots multiplied by 100. The RI rating was as follows: RI = 0 (immune), RI < 1 (highly resistant), $1 \leq \text{RI} < 10$ (very resistant), $10 \leq \text{RI} < 25$ (moderately resistant), $25 \leq \text{RI} < 50$ (slightly resistant) and $\text{RI} \geq 50$ (susceptible) (Taylor, 1967). The experiment was carried out twice in different years, using the same set of cultivars to determine the consistency of differences in nematode resistance.

2.5. Statistical analysis

Data on GI, RI and number of eggs from trial and 1 and 2 were combined and treated as a single trial during subsequent analyses and transformed using $\log(x + 1)$ before analyses. The data from each of trials 1 and 2 were subjected to analysis of variance (ANOVA) using Genstat (Payne et al., 2011) before combining them into a single analysis. The relationship between GI and number of eggs was determined using Pearson's correlation coefficient in SPSS (Norusis, 1995).

3. Results

3.1. RKN survey

The nematode species *M. incognita*, *M. hapla*, *M. enterolobii* and an unknown *Meloidogyne* sp. were identified by analyses of mtDNA. Primers C2F3/MRH106 were able to robustly differentiate *M. hapla* (662 base pair (bp) amplicon), *M. enterolobii* (841 bp amplicon) and an unknown *Meloidogyne* sp. (399 bp amplicon). PCR products >1700 bp restricted with HinfI, yielded three fragments robustly identified as *M. incognita*. Representative sequences have been deposited in GenBank: *M. incognita* (accession KX214347, 1661 bp), *M. hapla* (accession KX214348, 592 bp; accession KX214349, 585 bp), *M. enterolobii* (accession KX214350, 759 bp) and the unknown *Meloidogyne* sp. (accession KX214351, 353 bp). The latter *Meloidogyne* sp. sequence had 99% homology (*e*-value: $2e-145$) to *M. javanica* (GenBank accession KP202352) (Humphreys-Pereira and Eling, 2015), however a deletion > 1376 bp spanned an intron and the tRNA-His gene region.

Meloidogyne incognita was observed in all fields in the sampled

regions whereas *M. hapla* was recorded in all sub-counties except Kiharu and Matayos, and *M. enterolobii* was observed in Kiharu, Matayos and Mosoch. The unidentified *Meloidogyne* sp. was recorded in Kiharu sub-county (Fig. 1; Fig. 2). Angorom (Western Province), Mwamoja (Nyanza Province), Inyeke, Iveche and Kangaru (Eastern Province) were the only five villages where *M. hapla* was recorded, while *M. enterolobii* was observed in Buruba (Western Province), Kongoini (Central Province) and Mwamasore (Nyanza Province). The unidentified *Meloidogyne* sp. was recorded only in Kongoini village in Kiharu sub-county.

3.2. Resistance screening of sweet potato to *M. incognita*

In the resistance screening experiment, the susceptible control, Beauregard had a GI of 4.7 ± 0.15 and 552.6 ± 12.13 eggs. The resistant control Tanzania had a GI of 1.5 ± 0.17 and 15.3 ± 2.70 eggs and an RI of 2.73. There was a significant difference in the GI ($F_{71,359} = 25.68$; $P < 0.001$), number of eggs ($F_{71,359} = 51.5$; $P < 0.001$) and RI ($F_{71,359} = 25.14$; $P < 0.001$) among the varieties. A GI greater than 3 was recorded in 23.6% of the varieties while the RI ranged from 1 to 90%. The sweet potato variety EM7 had the highest number of eggs. The varieties MK10, EM9, and SPK 004 had a GI ≤ 1 and RI ≤ 1 . On the other hand, EM6, EM7, Kenspot 4, Kenspot 6, MK15, MK16, MK9 and MK5 had a GI ≥ 4 and an RI ≥ 50 (Table 2). Based on the RI, 68.1%, 15.3%, 5.6% and 11.1% of the varieties were very resistant, moderately resistant, slightly resistant and susceptible respectively. GI was positively correlated to the number of eggs ($r = 0.880$, $P < 0.01$).

4. Discussion

4.1. RKN survey

Nematode abundance and composition is significantly influenced by soil properties, rainfall and temperature (Nielsen et al., 2014). The most prevalent species in all the sampled regions was *M. incognita*, which is a common RKN in Kenyan agroecosystems (Desaeger and Rao, 1999; Kimenju et al., 1999; Nzesya et al., 2014; Van den Berg et al., 2001). The geographic distribution of *M. incognita* is largely dependent on environmental factors such as temperature and moisture (Sasser, 1977). Due to their poikilothermic nature, elevated temperatures will likely lead to an increase in cumulative relative development rates of *M. incognita* in some cropping systems (Waals et al., 2013). Such a scenario may exacerbate existing problems in the five sub-counties where *M. incognita* population density was found to be relatively high and may yet initiate problems for locations where *M. incognita* is, in comparative terms, currently relatively low. Thus, the projected increase in temperature and rainfall (Christensen et al., 2007) may expose areas of food production in East Africa to significantly greater impact of RKN (and other nematode species), leading to national food security issues (Hassan et al., 2013).

Association of *M. hapla* and *M. enterolobii* with Kenyan sweet potato observed in this study and identification of a *M. javanica*-like *Meloidogyne* sp. sequence with a large deletion has not been previously reported. *Meloidogyne incognita*, *M. javanica* and *M. arenaria*

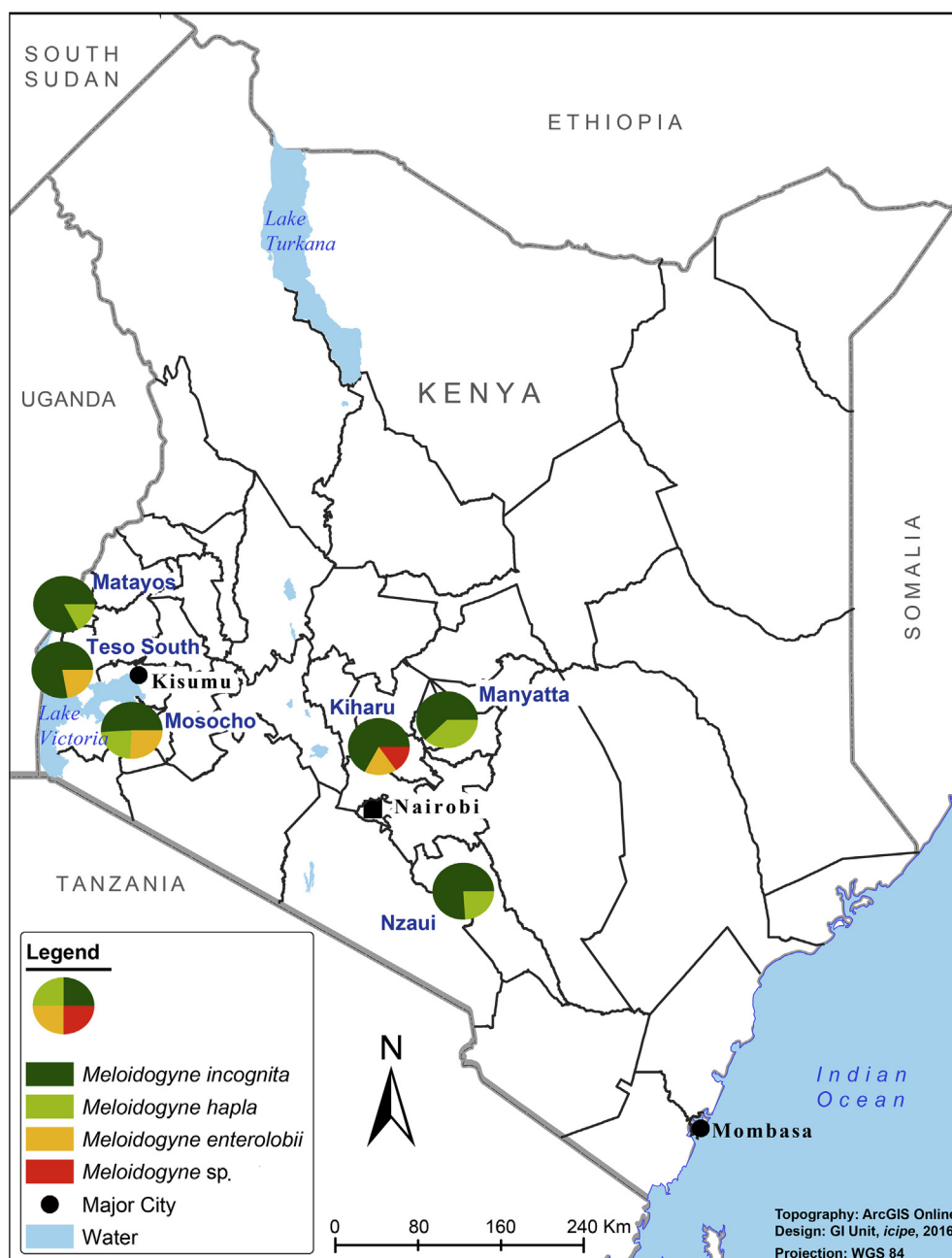


Fig. 1. Map of Kenya showing the distribution of *Meloidogyne* species in Kiharu, Manyatta, Matayos, Mosocho, Nzaui and Teso South sub-counties, Kenya.

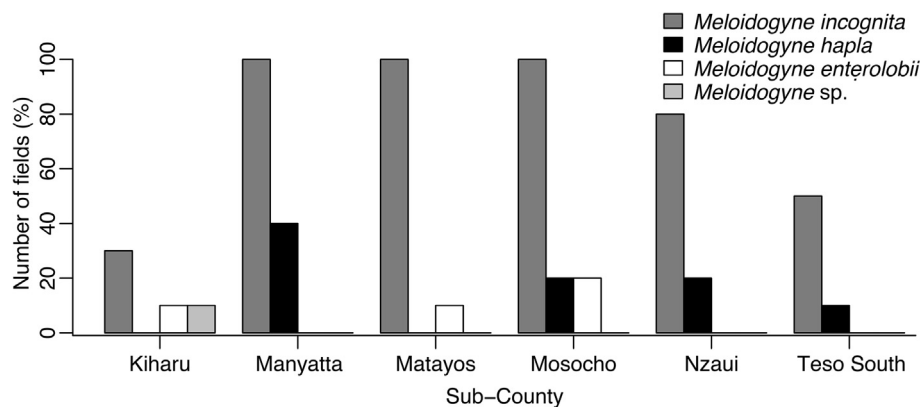


Fig. 2. Occurrence of *M. incognita*, *M. hapla*, *M. enterolobii* and *Meloidogyne sp.* in sweet potato growing regions of Kiharu, Manyatta, Matayos, Mosocho, Nzaui and Teso South sub-counties, Kenya.

Table 2

Galling index, number of eggs, reproduction index (RI) and resistance level of sweet potato varieties infected with *Meloidogyne incognita*. Data (\pm SE) are back-transformed means from two trials.

| Sweet potato variety | ^a Galling index | Number of eggs | ^b RI | ^c Resistance level |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| BS11 | 2.95 \pm 0.08 | 60.66 \pm 0.3 | 11 \pm 0.37 | MR |
| Kenspot 1 | 2.78 \pm 0.06 | 60.38 \pm 0.17 | 12 \pm 0.75 | MR |
| EM2 | 2.78 \pm 0.06 | 67.39 \pm 0.2 | 13 \pm 0.68 | MR |
| Cape 10 | 3.18 \pm 0.05 | 85.7 \pm 0.1 | 14 \pm 1.02 | MR |
| Kabode | 3 \pm 0 | 81.04 \pm 0.03 | 15 \pm 0.58 | MR |
| MK14 | 3 \pm 0 | 73.82 \pm 0.03 | 16 \pm 1.12 | MR |
| MK4 | 3 \pm 0 | 92.97 \pm 0.04 | 18 \pm 1.02 | MR |
| TS1 | 3.78 \pm 0.05 | 99.93 \pm 0.1 | 17 \pm 1 | MR |
| MK2 | 3.37 \pm 0.06 | 98.08 \pm 0.08 | 19 \pm 0.97 | MR |
| MK12 | 3.57 \pm 0.06 | 113.55 \pm 0.11 | 21 \pm 1.2 | MR |
| Miezi tatu | 3.37 \pm 0.06 | 109.66 \pm 0.28 | 21 \pm 1.08 | MR |
| Beauregard (Susceptible control) | 4.7 \pm 0.15 | 552.6 \pm 12.13 | 100 \pm 2.28 | S |
| MK15 | 4 \pm 0 | 310.17 \pm 0.1 | 54 \pm 0.63 | S |
| MK16 | 4.58 \pm 0.05 | 326.34 \pm 0.18 | 56 \pm 1.33 | S |
| EM6 | 4.78 \pm 0.04 | 420.7 \pm 0.19 | 71 \pm 1.5 | S |
| Kenspot 6 | 4.78 \pm 0.04 | 463.52 \pm 0.02 | 83 \pm 1 | S |
| Kenspot 4 | 4.78 \pm 0.04 | 497.88 \pm 0.01 | 86 \pm 0.51 | S |
| MK9 | 5 \pm 0 | 495.59 \pm 0.02 | 87 \pm 1.2 | S |
| MK5 | 5 \pm 0 | 516.61 \pm 0.01 | 89 \pm 2.23 | S |
| EM7 | 5 \pm 0 | 517.8 \pm 0.02 | 92 \pm 0.75 | S |
| BS7 | 3.57 \pm 0.06 | 152.46 \pm 0.14 | 26 \pm 0.68 | SR |
| BS1 | 4.19 \pm 0.04 | 185.64 \pm 0.02 | 34 \pm 1.16 | SR |
| Kampala 1 | 3.96 \pm 0.07 | 184.78 \pm 0.21 | 35 \pm 1.02 | SR |
| EM3 | 4.19 \pm 0.04 | 230.74 \pm 0.15 | 38 \pm 1.62 | SR |
| BS9 | 1.17 \pm 0.08 | 8.51 \pm 0.2 | 2 \pm 0.24 | VR |
| Mbwayo | 1.17 \pm 0.08 | 7.69 \pm 0.28 | 2 \pm 0.58 | VR |
| Mosambi 3 | 1.17 \pm 0.08 | 6.41 \pm 0.28 | 2 \pm 0.58 | VR |
| EM9 | 1 \pm 0 | 6.69 \pm 0.22 | 1 \pm 0 | VR |
| MK10 | 1 \pm 0 | 6.53 \pm 0.31 | 1 \pm 0 | VR |
| SPK 004 | 1 \pm 0 | 6.59 \pm 0.26 | 1 \pm 0 | VR |
| BS15 | 1.35 \pm 0.1 | 12.43 \pm 0.15 | 2 \pm 0.2 | VR |
| Kenspot 3 | 1.17 \pm 0.08 | 11.45 \pm 0.18 | 2 \pm 0.49 | VR |
| KS2 | 1.17 \pm 0.08 | 7.11 \pm 0.15 | 2 \pm 0.49 | VR |
| BS12 | 1.17 \pm 0.08 | 11.11 \pm 0.23 | 2 \pm 0.51 | VR |
| KS3 | 1.17 \pm 0.08 | 5.82 \pm 0.28 | 2 \pm 0.51 | VR |
| KS1 | 1.17 \pm 0.08 | 5.85 \pm 0.11 | 3 \pm 0.6 | VR |
| Tanzania (Resistant control) | 1.5 \pm 0.17 | 15.3 \pm 2.70 | 3 \pm 0.49 | VR |
| Mosambi 1 | 2.37 \pm 0.07 | 16.5 \pm 0.05 | 3 \pm 0.37 | VR |
| BS6 | 1.55 \pm 0.1 | 13.76 \pm 0.23 | 3 \pm 0.58 | VR |
| BS10 | 1 \pm 0 | 11.42 \pm 0.09 | 2 \pm 0.32 | VR |
| BS5 | 1.17 \pm 0.08 | 7.89 \pm 0.31 | 2 \pm 0.55 | VR |
| TS2 | 1.17 \pm 0.08 | 7.95 \pm 0.31 | 2 \pm 0.55 | VR |
| Bungoma | 1.55 \pm 0.1 | 19.09 \pm 0.3 | 3 \pm 0.2 | VR |
| Mosambi 2 | 1.17 \pm 0.08 | 9.3 \pm 0.25 | 4 \pm 0.75 | VR |
| KS6 | 1.55 \pm 0.1 | 18.86 \pm 0.36 | 4 \pm 0.73 | VR |
| MK3 | 1.77 \pm 0.08 | 19.23 \pm 0.22 | 3 \pm 0.32 | VR |
| KS8 | 1.17 \pm 0.08 | 10.35 \pm 0.32 | 3 \pm 0.45 | VR |
| BS3 | 1.17 \pm 0.08 | 9.57 \pm 0.15 | 3 \pm 0.63 | VR |
| Nyakamoro | 1.77 \pm 0.08 | 19.23 \pm 0.1 | 3 \pm 0.84 | VR |
| TS3 | 1.17 \pm 0.08 | 10.51 \pm 0.18 | 3 \pm 0.89 | VR |
| BS8 | 1.35 \pm 0.1 | 17.79 \pm 0.22 | 4 \pm 0.73 | VR |
| EM1 | 2.18 \pm 0.06 | 25.3 \pm 0.08 | 4 \pm 0.8 | VR |
| EM4 | 1.77 \pm 0.08 | 25.06 \pm 0.22 | 4 \pm 0.51 | VR |
| MK7 | 1.55 \pm 0.1 | 17.45 \pm 0.18 | 4 \pm 0.87 | VR |
| EM8 | 1.77 \pm 0.08 | 28.11 \pm 0.28 | 5 \pm 0.24 | VR |
| BS14 | 1.77 \pm 0.08 | 17.84 \pm 0.32 | 5 \pm 0.6 | VR |
| Oburi | 1.77 \pm 0.08 | 17.45 \pm 0.07 | 5 \pm 0.81 | VR |
| KS7 | 1.77 \pm 0.08 | 22.07 \pm 0.27 | 5 \pm 1.02 | VR |
| BS2 | 1.55 \pm 0.1 | 16.74 \pm 0.3 | 4 \pm 0.77 | VR |
| MK8 | 1.77 \pm 0.08 | 27.71 \pm 0.17 | 5 \pm 0.73 | VR |
| BS4 | 1.77 \pm 0.08 | 25.92 \pm 0.23 | 5 \pm 0.8 | VR |
| Kenspot 2 | 1.77 \pm 0.08 | 28.92 \pm 0.27 | 6 \pm 0.24 | VR |
| MK1 | 1.77 \pm 0.08 | 20.23 \pm 0.1 | 6 \pm 0.75 | VR |
| Vitaa | 1.77 \pm 0.08 | 25.98 \pm 0.21 | 6 \pm 0.75 | VR |
| MK11 | 2 \pm 0 | 25.61 \pm 0.11 | 6 \pm 0.98 | VR |
| Kampala 2 | 1.77 \pm 0.08 | 23.43 \pm 0.2 | 5 \pm 0.89 | VR |
| EM5 | 2 \pm 0 | 35.64 \pm 0.08 | 6 \pm 0.37 | VR |
| MK6 | 2.18 \pm 0.06 | 35.98 \pm 0.28 | 6 \pm 0.75 | VR |
| TS4 | 2 \pm 0 | 33.59 \pm 0.06 | 7 \pm 0.8 | VR |
| EM10 | 2.57 \pm 0.07 | 38.63 \pm 0.07 | 8 \pm 0.68 | VR |
| KS5 | 2.78 \pm 0.06 | 41.17 \pm 0.09 | 8 \pm 0.58 | VR |
| KS4 | 2.57 \pm 0.07 | 33.83 \pm 0.11 | 7 \pm 0.89 | VR |
| BS13 | 2.78 \pm 0.06 | 51 \pm 0.15 | 9 \pm 0.24 | VR |
| MK13 | 2.57 \pm 0.07 | 41.46 \pm 0.21 | 9 \pm 1.05 | VR |

^a Galling index: 0 = 0 galls; 1 = 1–2 galls; 2 = 3–10 galls; 3 = 11–30 galls; 4 = 31–100 galls; 5 > 100 galls (Taylor and Sasser, 1978).

^b RI: Reproduction index = (number of eggs gram⁻¹ root of each sweet potato variety)/(number of eggs gram⁻¹ of root of susceptible Beauregard) \times 100 (Taylor, 1967).

^c Resistance level based on the RI where VR-Very Resistant, MR-Moderately Resistant, SR-Slightly Resistant and S-Susceptible.

are considered as the most damaging nematode species in sweet potato (Cervantes-Flores and Yencho, 2002; Giamalva et al., 1963). However, the impact of *M. enterolobii* and *M. hapla* on Kenyan sweet potato yields should also be considered. *Meloidogyne enterolobii*, a highly aggressive species that is well adapted to warm climates, causes more damage than other *Meloidogyne* species and has the ability to reproduce in diverse crop types, including those with resistance genes (Castagnone-Sereno, 2012). Although *M. hapla* and *M. enterolobii* were not recorded in all sub-counties, predicted climate change (Hoang et al., 2014) may affect the density and population dynamics of these species in Kenya, leading to increased sweet potato yield losses.

Meloidogyne incognita was recorded in all regions, including Kisii County, which is among the largest sweet potato production areas in Kenya (Kwach et al., 2010). Recently, increased rainfall and temperature has been recorded in Kisii County (Mugalavai and Kipkorir, 2003). Sustained changes in temperature and moisture may thus result in higher populations of *M. incognita*, with a potential concomitant reduction in sweet potato yield, especially if susceptible varieties are cultivated.

4.2. Resistance screening of sweet potato to *M. incognita*

The tested sweet potato varieties showed different responses to infection with *M. incognita*. Similar results were observed in other RKN resistance screening studies of sweet potato (Cervantes-Flores and Yencho, 2002). In this study, 11.1% of the tested sweet potato varieties were classified as susceptible. Among them was the variety EM7, which had the highest absolute number of eggs. Susceptibility of sweet potato varieties to RKN is probably due to the presence of previously reported unfavorable alleles that reduce the level of resistance (Cervantes-Flores et al., 2008). Sweet potato varieties Kenspot 4 and 6 were also classified as susceptible. These varieties were collected from KALRO, Alupe and were part of a breeding program aimed at producing orange fleshed sweet potato with high β -carotene. Due to the high susceptibility of these varieties, it would be important to cross them with *M. incognita* resistant varieties in order to get higher yields.

A large number (68.0%) of the tested sweet potato varieties were very resistant (RI < 10%) to *M. incognita*. This is an indication of a high level of resistance to *M. incognita* in the sweet potato varieties presently cultivated in Kenya. Such resistance may break down at high soil temperatures associated with climate change (Dropkin, 1969; Williamson, 1998). In addition, the durability of this resistance may be compromised by continuous cropping of resistant or moderately resistant varieties due to an increase in highly pathogenic *Meloidogyne* races.

Very resistant sweet potato varieties with low GI and RI (GI \leq 1, RI \leq 1) were collected from Nzaui (MK10) and Manyatta (EM9 and SPK 004) sub-counties. GI is an important measure of nematode infection (Sasser et al., 1984) and has been previously used in selection of *M. incognita* resistant sweet potato (Cervantes-Flores et al., 2008), yam (Mudiopie et al., 2012) and cassava (Talwana et al., 1997). In the current study, a strong correlation was observed between GI and number of eggs. Similar positive correlations have been previously reported in sweet potato varieties Beauregard, Excel, Hernandez and Porto Rico (Cervantes-Flores and Yencho, 2002). RI is also considered a good indicator of resistance as it measures nematode establishment and reproduction in the host (Hadiisoganda and Sasser, 1982). It has been successfully used in selection of RKN resistant sweet potato (Gomes et al., 2015; Marchese et al., 2010). An RI of 1 in sweet potato varieties is indicative of low *M. incognita* reproduction. Resistance to *M. incognita* is qualitatively inherited and controlled by multiple genes (Ukoskit et al., 1997). The resistance observed in these varieties may

have been due to additive effects of multiple *M. incognita* resistance genes (Cervantes-Flores et al., 2008). In addition, the inability of infective juveniles to form feeding sites in the plant and/or production of pre-infection compounds that prevent penetration of nematodes into the plant roots (Jatala and Russell, 1972) may have also contributed to the observed resistance.

With exception of SPK 004, which was collected from Kiharu sub-county and KALRO, Embu, the very resistant sweet potato varieties were collected from farmers' fields and their agronomic characteristics have not been determined and they require further analysis. In contrast, SPK 004 is a well characterized variety released in Kenya in 2000 (Mcharo and Ndolo, 2013), with its morphological and genetic diversity previously characterized and known to be resistant to sweet potato virus disease (Karuri et al., 2009). It has a high dry matter content (Karuri et al., 2009) and β -carotene content of 6200 $\mu\text{g}100\text{ g}^{-1}$, 7800 $\mu\text{g}100\text{ g}^{-1}$, 4630 $\mu\text{g}100\text{ g}^{-1}$ when raw, boiled and roasted, respectively (Kidmose et al., 2007). In addition, it is highly palatable with yields that are stable across different environments (Mcharo and Ndolo, 2013). Thus, SPK 004 is a candidate sweet potato variety that could be cultivated in regions where *M. incognita* population density is high. The other resistant sweet potato varieties identified in this study can also be used as an economically feasible means of RKN management. In addition to producing high yields, roots from the resistant sweet potato varieties will have a high commercial value due to reduced root cracking.

5. Conclusion

The identification of sweet potato varieties in this study with putative resistance to *M. incognita* infection will be of utility in future breeding programs to maintain yields of a key nutritional crop under increasing constraints from changing land use and changing climate. The information on *Meloidogyne* species diversity in Kenyan sweet potato fields will also be useful in designing and implementing nematode management programs.

Acknowledgements

This work was supported by the Department for International Development under the Climate Impact Research Capacity and Leadership Enhancement (CIRCLE) programme and African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD). The James Hutton Institute received financial support from the Scottish Government, Rural and Environment Science and Analytical Services Division. We thank Jackson Kimani from icipe's Geo-Information Unit for help in creating the map.

References

- Blok, V.C.B., Wishart, J.W., Fargette, M.F., Berthier, K.B., Phillips, M.S.P., 2002. Mitochondrial DNA differences distinguishing *Meloidogyne mayaguensis* from the major species of tropical root-knot nematodes. *Nematology* 4, 773–781.
- Castagnone-Sereno, P., 2012. *Meloidogyne enterolobii* (= *M. mayaguensis*): profile of an emerging, highly pathogenic, root-knot nematode species. *Nematology* 14, 133–138.
- Cervantes-Flores, J.C., Yencho, G.C., 2002. Efficient evaluation of resistance to three root-knot nematode species in selected sweet potato cultivars. *HortScience* 37, 390–392.
- Cervantes-Flores, J.C., Yencho, G.C., Pecota, K.V., Sosinski, B., Mwanga, R.O.M., 2008. Detection of quantitative trait loci and inheritance of root-knot nematode resistance in sweet potato. *J. Am. Soc. Hortic. Sci.* 133, 844–851.
- Chen, P., Roberts, P.A., Metcalf, A.E., Hyman, B.C., 2003. Nucleotide substitution patterning within the *Meloidogyne* rDNA D3. *J. Nematol.* 35, 404–410.
- Christensen, J.H., Hewitson, B., Busuioac, A., Chen, A., Gao, X., Held, I., Jones, R., Kolli, R., Kwon, W., Laprise, R., Magaña Rueda, V., Mearns, L., Menéndez, C.G., Räisänen, J., Rinke, A., Sarr, A., Whetton, P., 2007. Regional climate projections. Contribution of Working Group I to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. In: Solomon, S., Qin, D.,

- Manning, M., Chen, Z., Marquis, M. (Eds.), *Climate Change 2007: the Physical Science Basis*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA.
- Claessens, L., Stoorvogel, J.J., Antle, J.M., 2009. *Ex ante* assessment of dual-purpose sweet potato in the crop – livestock system of western Kenya : a minimum-data approach. *Agric. Syst.* 99, 13–22.
- Clark, C., Moyer, J., 1988. *Compendium of Sweet Potato Diseases*. APS Press, St Paul, MN.
- Desaeger, J., Rao, M.R., 1999. The root-knot nematode problem in sesbania fallows and scope for managing it in western Kenya. *Agrofor. Syst.* 47, 273–288.
- Devran, B.D., Sogut, M., 2009. Distribution and identification of root-knot nematodes from Turkey. *J. Nematol.* 41, 128–133.
- Dropkin, V.H., 1969. Necrotic reaction of tomatoes and other hosts resistant to *Meloidogyne* reversal by temperature, reversal by temperature. *Phytopathology* 59, 1632–1637.
- Elling, A.A., 2013. Major emerging problems with minor *Meloidogyne* species. *Phytopathology* 103, 1092–1102.
- FAOSTAT, 2015. FAOSTAT [database on the Internet]. Rome-Italy: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. <http://faostat3.fao.org/browse/Q/QC/E>. Accessed 16.12.2015.
- Giamalva, M., Martin, W., Hernandez, T., 1963. Sweetpotato varietal reaction to species and races of root-knot nematodes. *Phytopathology* 53, 1187–1189.
- Gomes, J., Junior, V., Mattes de Oliveira, C., Azevedo, A., Maluf, W., Gomes, L., 2015. Resistance of sweet potato clones to *Meloidogyne incognita* races 1 and 3. *Bragant. Campin* 74, 291–297.
- Hadisoeganda, W., Sasser, J.N., 1982. Resistance of tomato, bean, southern pea, and garden pea cultivars to root-knot nematodes based on host suitability. *Plant Dis.* 66, 145–150.
- Hagenimana, V., Low, J., Anyango, M., Kurz, K., Gichuki, S.T., Kabira, J., 2001. Enhancing vitamin A intake in young children in western Kenya: orange-fleshed sweet potatoes and women farmers can serve as key entry points. *Food Nutr. Bull.* 22, 376–387.
- Hassan, M.A., Pham, T., Shi, H., Zheng, J., 2013. Nematode threats to global food security. *Acta Agric. Scand. Sect. B - Soil Plant Sci.* 63, 420–425.
- Hoang, M.H.H., Namirembe, S., van Noordwijk, M., Catacutan, D., Oborn, I., Perez-Teran, A.S.S., Nguyen, H.Q.Q., Dumas-Johansen, M.K.K., 2014. Farmer portfolios, strategic diversity management and climate-change adaptation – implications for policy in Vietnam and Kenya. *Clim. Dev.* 6, 216–225.
- Hu, M.X., Zhuo, K., Liao, J.L., 2011. Multiplex PCR for the simultaneous identification and detection of *Meloidogyne incognita*, *M. enterolobii*, and *M. javanica* using DNA extracted directly from individual galls. *Nematology* 101, 1270–1277.
- Humphreys-Pereira, D.A., Elling, A.A., 2015. Mitochondrial genome plasticity among species of the nematode genus *Meloidogyne* (Nematoda: Tylenchina). *Gene* 560, 173–183.
- Hussey, R.S., Barker, K.R., 1973. A comparison of methods of collecting inocula of *Meloidogyne* species including a new technique. *Plant Dis. Rep.* 57, 1025–1028.
- Janssen, T., Karssen, G., Verhaeven, M., Coyne, D., Bert, W., 2016. Mitochondrial coding genome analysis of tropical root-knot nematodes (*Meloidogyne*) supports haplotype based diagnostics and reveals evidence of recent reticulate evolution. *Sci. Rep.* 6, 22591.
- Jatala, P., Russell, C., 1972. Nature of sweet potato resistance to *Meloidogyne incognita* and the effects of temperature on parasitism. *J. Nematol.* 4, 1–7.
- Jones, J.T., Haegeman, A., Danchin, E.G.J., Gaur, H.S., Helder, J., Jones, M.G.K., Kikuchi, T., Manzanilla-López, R., Palomares-Rius, J.E., Wesemael, W.I.M.M.L., Perry, R.N., 2013. Top 10 plant-parasitic nematodes in molecular plant pathology. *Mol. Plant Pathol.* 14, 946–961.
- Kaguongo, W., Ortmann, G., Wale, E., Darroch, M., Low, J., 2012. Factors influencing adoption and intensity of adoption of orange flesh sweet potato varieties: evidence from an extension intervention in Nyanza and Western provinces, Kenya. *Afr. J. Agric. Res.* 7, 493–503.
- Karuri, H.W., Amata, R.L., Amugune, N.O., Waturu, C., 2009. Characterization of Kenyan sweet potato genotypes for SPVD resistance and high dry matter content using simple sequence repeat markers. *Afr. J. Biotechnol.* 8, 2169–2175.
- Kidmose, U., Christensen, L., Agili, S., Thilsted, S., 2007. Effect of home preparation practices on the content of provitamin A carotenoids in coloured sweet potato varieties (*Ipomoea batatas* Lam.) from Kenya. *Innov. Food Sci. Emerg. Technol.* 8, 399–406.
- Kimenju, J.W., Karanja, N.K., Macharia, I., 1999. Plant parasitic nematodes associated with common bean in Kenya and the effect of *Meloidogyne* infection on bean nodulation. *Afr. Crop Sci. J.* 7, 503–510.
- Kwach, J.K., Odhiambo, G.O., Dida, M.M., Gichuki, S.T., 2010. Participatory consumer evaluation of twelve sweet potato varieties in Kenya. *Afr. J. Biotechnol.* 9, 1600–1609.
- Lawrence, G., Clark, C., Wright, V., 1986. Influence of *Meloidogyne incognita* on resistant and susceptible sweet potato cultivars. *J. Nematol.* 18, 59–65.
- Marchese, A., Maluf, W.R., Gonçalves, A.C., Gonçalves, R.D.S., Gomes, L.A.A., 2010. Seleção de clones de batata-doce resistentes a *Meloidogyne incognita* raça 1. *Pesqui. Agropecu. Bras.* 45, 997–1004.
- Mcharo, M., Ndolo, P., 2013. Root-yield performance of pre-release sweet potato genotypes in Kenya. *J. Appl. Biosci.* 65, 4914–4921.
- Mudiope, J., Coyne, D.L., Adipala, E., Talwana, H.A.L., 2012. Damage to yam (*Dioscorea* spp.) by root knot nematode (*Meloidogyne* spp.) under field and storage conditions in Uganda. *Nematropica* 42, 137–145.
- Mugalavai, E.M., Kipkorir, E., 2003. Assessing the potential of maize growing seasons for Western Kenya using agro-climatic indices. *Int. J. Disaster Manag. Risk Reduct.* 5, 53–73.
- Mukras, M.S., Alphonse, O.J., Momanyi, G., 2013. Determinants of demand for sweet potatoes at the farm, retail and wholesale markets in Kenya. *Adv. Econ. Bus.* 1, 150–158.
- Navas, A., Castagnone-Sereno, P., Blazquez, J., Esparrago, G., 2001. Genetic structure and diversity within local populations of *Meloidogyne* (Nematoda: Meloidogynidae). *Nematology* 3, 243–253.
- Nielsen, U.N., Ayres, E., Wall, D.H., Li, G., Bardgett, R.D., Wu, T., Garey, J.R., 2014. Global-scale patterns of assemblage structure of soil nematodes in relation to climate and ecosystem properties. *Glob. Ecol. Biogeogr.* 23, 968–978.
- Niu, J.H., Jian, H., Guo, Q.X., Chen, C.L., Wang, X.Y., Liu, Q., Guo, Y.D., 2012. Evaluation of loop-mediated isothermal amplification (LAMP) assays based on 5S rDNA-IGS2 regions for detecting *Meloidogyne enterolobii*. *Plant Pathol.* 61, 809–819.
- Norusis, M., 1995. SPSS 6.1 Guide to Data Analysis. Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs.
- Nzesya, M.J., Wangari, K.J., Maina, M.W., Peter, W.M., Elijah, G.K., 2014. Plant parasitic nematodes associated with coffee in Kenya and factors influencing their occurrence, abundance and diversity. *J. Biol. Agric. Healthc.* 4, 120–129.
- Ogallal, J.L., McClure, M.A., 1995. Induced resistance to *Meloidogyne hapla* by other *Meloidogyne* species on tomato and pyrethrum plants. *J. Nematol.* 27, 441–447.
- Onkendi, E.M., Kariuki, G.M., Marais, M., Moleleki, L.N., 2014. The threat of root-knot nematodes (*Meloidogyne* spp.) in Africa: a review. *Plant Pathol.* 63, 727–737.
- Payne, R.W., Murray, D.A., Harding, S.A., Baird, D.B., Soutar, D.M., 2011. An Introduction to GenStat for Windows, fourteenth ed.
- Pokharel, R.R., Abawi, G.S., Zhang, N., Duxbury, J.M., Smart, C.D., 2007. Characterization of isolates of *Meloidogyne* from rice-wheat production fields in Nepal. *J. Nematol.* 39, 221–230.
- Powers, T.O., Harris, T.S., 1993. A polymerase chain reaction method for identification of five major *Meloidogyne* species. *J. Nematol.* 25, 1–6.
- Sasser, J.N., 1977. Worldwide dissemination and importance of the root-knot nematodes, *Meloidogyne* spp. *J. Nematol.* 9, 26–29.
- Sasser, J.N., Carter, C., Hartman, K.M., 1984. Standardization of Host Suitability Studies and Reporting of Resistance to Root-knot Nematodes. Raleigh, North Carolina.
- Stanton, J., Hugall, A., Moritz, C., 1997. Nucleotide polymorphisms and an improved PCR-based mtDNA diagnostic for parthenogenetic root-knot nematodes (*Meloidogyne* spp.). *Fundam. Appl. Nematol.* 20, 261–268.
- Talwana, H.A.L., Speijer, P.R., Adipala, E., Maslen, N.R., 1997. Early screening of cassava for resistance to root-knot nematodes. *Nematropica* 27, 19–25.
- Taylor, A.L., 1967. Introduction to Research on Plant Nematology: a FAO Guide to Study and Control of the Plant Parasitic Nematodes. Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, Rome.
- Taylor, A.L., Sasser, J.N., 1978. Biology, Identification and Control of Root Knot Nematodes (*Meloidogyne* Species). A cooperative publication of North Carolina State University, Dept. of Plant Pathology, and USAID, Raleigh, NC, USA.
- Tedesco, I., Stathers, T., 2015. Sweetpotato Value Chains in Kenya: a Business Opportunity for Puree Processing and the Potential Role for Commercial Fresh Root Storage. www.sweetpotatoknowledge.org. Accessed 18.12.2015.
- Tenente, G.C.M.V., de Ley, P., de Ley, I.T., Karssen, G., Vanfleteren, J.R., 2004. Sequence analysis of the D2/D3 region of the large subunit rDNA from different *Meloidogyne* isolates. *Nematropica* 34, 1–12.
- Tigano, M.S., Carneiro, A., Jeyaprakash, A., Dickson, D., Adams, B., 2005. Phylogeny of *Meloidogyne* spp. based on 18S rDNA and the intergenic region of mitochondrial DNA sequences. *Nematology* 7, 851–862.
- Tumwegamire, S., Kapinga, R., Zhang, D., Crissmann, C., Agili, S., 2004. Opportunities for promoting orange-fleshed sweet potato as a mechanism for combating Vitamin A deficiency in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Afr. Crop Sci. J.* 12, 241–252.
- Ukoskit, K., Thompson, P., Watson, C., 1997. Identifying a randomly amplified polymorphic DNA (RAPD) marker linked to a gene for root-knot nematode resistance in sweetpotato. *J. Am. Soc. Hortic. Sci.* 122, 818–821.
- Van den Berg, E., Marais, M., Kandji, S., Mounport, D., Ndiaye, B., Cadet, P., 2001. Plant-parasitic nematodes associated with maize-bean intercropping systems in Kenya. *Afr. Plant Prot.* 7, 81–84.
- Waals, J.E., van der Krüger, K., Franke, A.C., Haverkort, A.J., Steyn, J.M., 2013. Climate change and potato production in contrasting South African agro-ecosystems 3. Effects on relative development rates of selected pathogens and pests. *Potato Res.* 56, 67–84.
- Wiesel, L., Daniell, T.J., King, D., Neilson, R., 2015. Determination of the optimal soil sample size to accurately characterise nematode communities in soil. *Soil Biol. Biochem.* 80, 89–91.
- Williamson, V.M., 1998. Root-knot nematode resistance genes in tomato and their potential for future use. *Annu. Rev. Phytopathol.* 36, 277–293.